Education, Meet the Internet

The internet has had an enormous impact on education, bringing it to life and exponentially increasing the possibilities for people of all ages to become and stay life-long learners. As of 2007, which is severely outdated, even ancient by technology standards, according to USA Today, “the world logged on: 747 million adults in January”. (Jones, 2007). The internet not only has a large impact on students and teachers, but even adults can learn new skills in a matter of minutes. If a person does not know how to change a tire, they can find videos on what to do and even read articles with detailed descriptions or even chat online with another person.

As a kid, I cannot remember when internet was accessible in school. I remember in elementary school I had to take keyboarding, which did me no good since I still type by pecking, not the traditional methods. I do remember having to have research papers and my only tools available to me where the library books or encyclopedias, both of which may not have been updated for several years. As a student, I had very few sources to check from and gather different opinions on important items. Now, students can gather information from anyone that feels like voicing their opinion. According to Pandey, “By referring to a large number of resources, a serious student utilizes his or her common sense and judgment skills to choose the best material and use it as an advantage to complete the project.” (Pandey, 2011).

I interviewed a fellow teacher, Ms. Tammy Jones, who teaches AP History about how internet changed the way education has been impacted by the introduction of the internet. Her response was that the internet has had a tremendous impact on what students can find and access in such a short amount of time. Students with the internet can now contact experts in the field that they are researching and receive instant feedback in the matter of a day or so compared to weeks or months. Collecting data can be as simple as posting a question of Facebook and letting others respond to your question. Networking, either socially or for education can now be possible with the internet. The ability to network with other classes and students around the world also provides many exciting opportunities for students. (Cornell, 2007)

How people have access to the internet has changed drastically as well. When the internet was first being used, accessing the information was very time consuming. Another issue was the size of the machines that you had to use. These machines were very bulky and slow. Connections to the internet took a considerable amount of time as well, with dial up connections being the dominant way of connecting to the web. At the present period, students can access a higher rate of information on machines now that can fit in your pocket at speeds that were unthinkable at times. In 2009, according to the Pew Internet Project, 87% of all youth between the ages of 12 and 17 use the internet. That translates into about 21 million people. (Hitlin & Rainie, 2005)

In closing, to say that the internet has had an enormous impact would be an understatement. We have seen the world change so much in the last 25 years that and even more so in the last 5 years that there is no telling what we can expect to see. The impact that the internet has on education is limitless as well. Luckily, we will have a generation coming in that use of the internet is as common of a task as speaking your native language.

# Works Cited

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